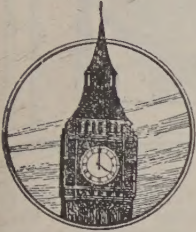


THE LABOUR ORGANISER

No. 146

AUGUST, 1933.

Price 4d.



Topics of the Month

ON the 29th July the Clay Cross Divisional Labour Party, by a unanimous vote, invited the Right Hon. Arthur Henderson to become its Parliamentary candidate for the by-election now being fought out in that constituency. No doubt, of course, exists as to the result and we believe that the Movement generally has experienced a sense of deep satisfaction at the prospect of Mr. Henderson's early return to Parliament. Democratically selected, and returned, as he will be, by a majority that will leave no doubt as to the wishes of the electors, Mr. Henderson's triumph will mark a period in the return to sanity of the British electorate. Clay Cross will send a message to the "National" Government that will serve as the writing on the wall. But what is more, it will, we trust, by its verdict, send a message of hope to Europe and the world showing beyond cavil how the workers of this country yearn for peace, for disarmament and for the Socialist policy which alone can bring prosperity back to every sick nation. The Editor of this journal, who is acting as Election Agent in this contest, makes the confident prophecy that Clay Cross, knowing the eyes of the world are upon it, will not fail in its duty, or in the message that the world shall read.

The acceptance of the stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds by the late Member for Harborough will not be followed by an immediate by-election. It is common knowledge that during a recess the Speaker of the House of Commons *may* (not shall) issue a writ for a by-election after due notice being given to him of a vacancy, and after the publication in the Gazette of his intention to issue the writ. But the limitation of his power to which

attention is drawn by the present vacancy is not so well known. Acceptance of the stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds, which is a paid office under the Crown, automatically vacates a member's seat; but though the Speaker has power to issue the writ in certain cases this particular office is expressly excluded in the Act which enables him to do so. Our readers will, of course, be aware that each holder of the stewardship promptly resigns therefrom after it has served the purpose of securing release from Parliament. No M.P. ever "resigns" his seat, as the unsophisticated imagine, and resignation is not provided for in any Statute.

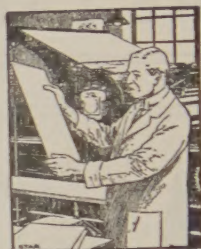
The by-election in the Harborough Division will, therefore, not arrive until November-December. And when it comes it will provide an interesting contest. Though a nineteen thousand majority faces Labour we have already discovered that the panic majorities of 1931 are not formidable obstacles. They are the crumbling walls on which the present Government rests with by now pretty certain knowledge of their insecurity. In 1929 Labour reached a poll which put it in sight of victory in Harborough. We believe that Labour is everywhere already "back to 1929." But that will not be near enough at the next General Election and Harborough will be a test of whether Labour is really ahead of the position it occupied in its peak year. The great Leicestershire Movement which has probably enjoyed more Socialist propaganda in the past than any part of the country will have to play its part in bringing victory in this election.

Following our usual practice for the month of August we have given our readers in this issue a selection of useful reprints from earlier issues. While our constant effort has always

(Concluded on page 144.)

NOTES and NOTIONS

PROVED, POOLED, PROOFED
AND PRINTED



The T.U.C. have issued a pamphlet entitled "Bedaux," in which the Bedaux system of payment by results receives detailed examination. The pamphlet gives an account of the system, and the experience gained by a number of Trades Unions in striving to defeat it, or to eliminate its objectionable features. We are going to hear a great deal more of Bedaux in the future, and therefore the information contained in this pamphlet is essential to those who may be called upon to deal with it, and certainly to those who as speakers desire to refer to the matter, and to understand the extent of its present adoption and modifications.

We are glad to note that the Woolwich Labour Party has just secured a by-election victory in a Tory ward, which places them now definitely in sight of control of the Woolwich Borough Council. The present result leaves the Borough Council evenly divided with 26 on either side. Labour has 23 Councillors and 3 Aldermen. The "Municipal Reformers," i.e., Liberals and Tories combined, number 22 Councillors and 4 Aldermen. We are interested to note that Mr. Barefoot used the poll card which was illustrated in our issue for July, 1929. There was a simultaneous delivery throughout the ward on the Monday prior to the election, this being followed up by a last reminder which reached all "Promises" on the first post on polling day. Mr. Barefoot tells us that the poll card caught on; it is much larger than the ordinary size, and more elaborate, and is therefore somewhat expensive. In Mr. Barefoot's opinion it is too expensive for a Parliamentary Election.

The National Trades Union Club

Ltd., is making an appeal for greater support. The Committee feels that the Club should be known even more than it is at present, both to London and Provincial Trade Unionists. Certainly its facilities are a great boon to those making calls in London or desiring to fraternise in a Labour home whether they live in London or no. Trades Union Branches may affiliate on payment of an annual fee of £1 1s. 0d., and this payment enables any member of the affiliated branch to use the Club's facilities on payment of a further sum of threepence per annum. It is claimed that the Movement has never possessed a better equipped Club; it is central, and meals may be obtained at all times, besides which facilities are available for private parties, branch dinners and other social functions. We advise our readers to send for further particulars to the Secretary-Manager, Mr. W. Arthur Peacock, 24/28, New Oxford Street, W.C.1.

The Wrekin Divisional Labour Party have made exceptional progress during the past year. This Division has been the scene of some famous by-elections. The Parliamentary candidate is Miss Picton Turbervill, O.B.E., who held the seat in the last Parliament. The Party has had an uphill fight for years, and a chronic debt around its neck. It has, however, recently been able to announce that during the past year it has cleared all liabilities, besides providing substantial equipment for the divisional office. Our hearty congratulations to the Party, its officers and particularly to its Secretary, Mr. J. Hogan.

Our readers will be interested to learn that Mr. Harold Croft's pamphlet, "Mass Power Socialism," which

LABOUR'S FOREIGN POLICY

By ARTHUR HENDERSON

Prices, post free : 1 copy 2½d.; 12 copies 1s. 6d.;
100 copies 12s.

Press Opinions

Daily Herald : "Mr. Henderson's statement of Labour's Foreign Policy is, in form, a pamphlet. It is, in fact, a State Paper of the highest importance."

Time and Tide : "Mr. Henderson's pamphlet is the most heartening message to the people of this country that we have seen in many a day."

The Economist : "Mr. Henderson has chosen the right moment for this welcome declaration."

New Statesman and Nation : "A clearly reasoned and energetic piece of work."

News-Chronicle : "A Real Peace Policy. Mr. Henderson has done a public service by his admirably luminous statement."

Star : "The amazing thing is that any voice should be heard criticising this clear, temperate and noble statement of the case for what we call the 'League of Nations' policy."

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we reviewed in our last issue, has made no small stir in the Movement. We gather that the London agents had a long and interesting discussion on the plan, and finally agreed to support the scheme. Apparently too, a number of Local Parties have indicated definite support. The latest figures available show that some forty Parties have sent in resolutions of support, and sixty candidates have replied in favour. We have been informed that the matter has been officially before the Headquarters of the Party, although we have no knowledge of any decision having yet been come to.

We have received for review a shilling book entitled, "The Riddle of the Rates," published by the "Local Government Chronicle." Mr. W. Ivor Jennings, M.A., LL.B., is the author, and in telling us all about rates, what they are, and what they are for, Mr. Jennings almost of necessity comes to the conclusion which all Socialists arrived at regarding this matter long ago. He answers the "riddle" as to whether Local Government is a burden on industry and the answer necessarily supports the Socialist case. This book is one to recommend or to lend to those mistaken individuals who too readily fall into Tory clap-trap about the burden of the rates, for the case is impartially stated; the book has a further value, for it gives us a bird's eye view of British Local Government.

Another new Party. In common perhaps with some of our readers, we have received a copy of the "Eugenicist," in which it appears from a Manifesto and Creed contained therein, that it is hoped to form a Eugenicist Party in the House of Commons. From what one gathers of certain proposals electioneering might become an even more highly diverting pastime than at present, if the said proposals are to be seriously put before the electors, especially the women electors. But we are afraid this Party is stillborn—which is certainly not eugenic.

Mr. A. J. Heal, Labour Agent, Halifax, writes contesting the point of view presented by "Jack Cutter" last month, in which the latter laid it down that agents ordinarily refrain from discussions on policy because that is the task of the Movement, the job of the agent being to organise

support for policy when framed. Mr. Heal is somewhat severe in his chastisement of this point of view, and he holds that when the Movement is formulating its policy, agents should bring their knowledge and experience to bear in order to see that the policy is in accord with Socialist ideals. Perhaps "Jack Cutter" would like to retort that the agents are not necessarily the custodians of the Party's ideals, but we have no intention of permitting a scrap in our columns upon this question. The two points of view are now before our readers, and agents themselves must settle the part they are to take and the extent to which they will aid in shaping the policy of the Labour Party.

Arthur Woodburn writes in the current issue of "Plebs" on "Roosevelt Gives American Capitalism a Blood Transfusion." We would rather have expressed the title as "Monkey Glands to Capitalism." Anyway, Socialists will watch Roosevelt's experiment with feelings not unmingled with derision. "Plebs" also contains this month an interesting article by Ernest Thurtle entitled "The Nazis Dig Themselves In," and further information of the Nazi terror is supplied by a Bulgarian doctor. "Plebs" is now priced at threepence.

We note with pleasure that Mrs. Marshall, of South Nottingham, recently won a prize offered by the Notts Women's Advisory Committee to the member of a Women's Section enrolling the highest number of individual members. Mrs. Marshall's score was 78 members. In Coventry a similar event was won by Mrs. Evans with 47 new members. In Northants the prize was shared by two women who had 24 and 21 new members respectively.

Appropos our recent mention of holiday trips, we note that the Mansfield Woodhouse (Notts.) Local Labour Party, are again this year organising a trip to Blackpool. Last year this Party took a large number of supporters to the Lancashire Mecca, and made a clear profit of over £11. Incidentally, we should like to mention that Mansfield Woodhouse is one of those Parties who possess a fine Labour Home which is run at a profit, and on temperance lines. Our heartiest congratulations to the gallant band of workers here.

We note that the Dudley Labour Party have launched a scheme for providing funds for new premises, and their suggestions may be of some help to others. It is proposed to establish a fund consisting of (a) loans from members free of interest for one year, (b) donations from members, (c) loans or donations from affiliated unions, and (d) monies raised from special building fund efforts.

We anticipate that Dudley's effort will be successful, for this Party has made magnificent progress during the past two or three years, during which period it has emerged from the slough of despond into the position of being one of the foremost Parties in its area for membership, propaganda activities and general virility. Its officers and leaders are to be commended for the progress made.

Southampton Labour Party inform us that they have a slogan "Don't Grumble—Vote Labour," and that it seems to be catching on. There is always something in a slogan, and perhaps the advice is quite good to the working people, who in 1929 returned a Tory Government. By the way, the slogan in the Clay Cross by-election is "We're all for Henderson"—and so it would appear.

"LABOUR'S FOREIGN POLICY."

An Important Pronouncement by Mr. Arthur Henderson.

The publication of this pamphlet at a crucial point in the world's history is of itself a satisfying and salutary thing.

By the time this note appears every Labour speaker, thinker or organiser worth his salt, will have obtained the pamphlet in order to read the clear lead herein given to the world as Labour's way out of the crisis.

The pamphlet has rightly been referred to as a State paper of the highest importance. It certainly may claim to be all that, and those who remember Mr. Henderson's pronouncements and bold advocacy in the autumn of 1917 and throughout 1918 will appreciate that, though the pronouncements of those days fell on deaf ears so far as the victors were concerned, Mr. Henderson speaks to-day with added weight, and with all the force that exceptional oppor-

tunity as President of the Disarmament Conference has given him for a complete and unrivalled knowledge of the world's thirst for peace.

Someone has said that this pamphlet is a peace policy, and someone else has described the pamphlet as a noble statement of Labour's case. We can only echo once again that it is all that, and Labour Secretaries and Agents who fail to push this pamphlet, when above all things it is essential that the people should understand the drift toward war, and Labour's way out of it, will indeed fail in their duty. Where no high thought prompts the ordering of this pamphlet, and the pushing of its sale at every meeting, perhaps literature readers may be tempted by the hint we have given them that this pamphlet is a best seller. It will "go" not only amongst Labour people and the crowd, but amongst waverers and even opponents. We ourselves sold four dozen at a single meeting the other afternoon.

Orders should roll in at once because we predict a record sale, and a "sold out" notice very soon. 100 copies cost 12s.

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Notes from an Agent's Desk

By JACK CUTTER.

Harold Croft Hits the Nail.

A few weeks ago someone kindly sent me a free copy of Harold Croft's pamphlet "Mass Power Socialism." When it arrived I was in the middle of an overwhelming press of work and laid it aside until I could digest it thoroughly, for, knowing Harold, I knew it would be something good. The chance did not come until the other day; then I was sorry I had not read it at once.

Here, I said, is precisely *the* stuff to give them, and promptly sat down and ordered a copy for each member of my General Committee, sent it free and paid the postage, inserting a covering letter to say in effect: Arise ye starvelings from your slumbers and get a load of this!

With the result that a special meeting of the G.C. is to be called to see what can be done about it. You've read the pamphlet, of course. You have grasped the magnitude and yet the amazing simplicity of Croft's idea. One great big effort, all in, everyone mobilised for action, the whole movement bent to the one great task, pulling together on the same job at the same time in every constituency . . . mass action. Mass attack. Mass propaganda. Great stuff, this mass!

I am an enthusiastic convert to Croftism. I believe it can be done. I cannot remember any occasion on which the Party failed when it tried to do the big things, and here is the biggest thing of all. Go to it, my brethren, and show Comrade Dismal James his fare stage.

A Miniature Workers' Olympiad.

Some months ago I read in the "L.O." how the Reading Labour Party was developing its sports side within the Movement, and, being interested and in the vicinity, I went to see how it was done. I found that on three consecutive Saturdays Labour sports events had been held. The first was a Labour regatta on the Thames. The Labour Rowing Club had commandeered a whole reach of the river; Labour crews and scullers dressed in slips of the local Party colours competed with other clubs in pairs, sculls and fours; a microphone announced the results and an amplifier played canned music between the

races, while a crowd of spectators watched and cheered the Labour wins under the trees on the bank. A unique event in the Labour Movement.

The next Saturday the Labour Lawn Tennis Club were the hosts for a "Workers' Wimbledon," placing their courts at the disposal of the National Workers' Sports Association for the second annual National Tennis Tournament. Over 150 games of tennis were played on the six courts in two days, and at the conclusion F. O. Roberts presented some of the finest trophies I have ever seen.

The third Saturday was devoted to field and track events in an ideally-situated stadium. Thirty-four events, including flat and cycle handicaps, weight lifting, tug-o'-war and a most amusing football match in sacks, were held strictly according to time-table and all in pukka order, under A.A.A. Laws and N.C.U. Rules, with the microphone announcing the results and times to the fifth of a second immediately after each race. Fred Montague gave a Socialist speech through the same mike, and the Labour candidate for the constituency, Dr. Somerville Hastings, distributed the fine array of prizes to the keen youngsters who won their events.

I asked the exhausted secretary what was the programme for the fourth Saturday and was told he was off to the Reading League of Youth Camp for a rest.

There seems to be tremendous possibilities in this kind of work, and with the facilities now offered by the National Workers' Sports Association there seems no reason why other parties should ignore this comparatively new approach to youth.

Is Young Folks What They Was?

And speaking of the Youth Movement, we will all wish Maurice Webb success in his new job. Its possibilities are unlimited and the creating of a Youth Organiser has not come before time. At present there are only 66 Leagues of Youth in the country, some of them with lamentably small memberships. Something wrong, obviously. Some of our older comrades lay the blame at the door of the youth of to-day. They get their pleasures

and excitements too easily, they say. Sated with gangster films and what not, politics becomes a relatively tame pastime. But not so very many years separate me from eligibility for League membership, and I remember that it seldom occurred to me to regard Socialism as politics in the accepted sense. To me it was a religion, a faith to serve. It made of me an intolerant bigot, as young people ought to be, unable to hear an argument against it. There *was* no argument against Socialism, anyway. That's the spirit we want in our Leagues nowadays and I see it here and there to hearten the special effort during the League's campaign month. What my own Party would do without its League and its Women's Sections I tremble to contemplate.

And if my allotted space is more than filled this month, put it down to sympathy for our Editor, who has to rush off to Clay Cross and will doubtless have to do his editing under severe difficulties.

TRAINING TEAMS OF SPEAKERS.

By Mr. A. ROSE, Labour Agent,
Southampton.

With the expansion of the Party and a general increase of activities we have found that the demand for speakers has exceeded the supply. In addition to our own requirements, we have repeated demands for speakers from surrounding rural areas.

An attempt is being made to deal with the matter by training new speakers, and our experiments may be of interest.

A speakers' class for women members only, held during the afternoons once a fortnight, has been attended by an average of about 15 and it is safe to say that we shall develop several useful speakers from this number.

The method adopted for this class has been to supply each member with notes on the technique of public speaking, and at each meeting about 15 minutes is spent in amplifying these notes. Then about 30 or 40 minutes is given over for speech and discussion by members of the class. At the end of that time, a cup of tea is introduced to make a definite break, and this is followed by the criticisms and suggestions of the tutor. Each member in turn takes the chair.

It does not appear possible to iso-

late public speaking as an entirely separate subject for tuition, and it is therefore necessary to take some subject for study and discussion side by side with public speaking. The subject at present is Ernest Bevin's "Plan for 2,000,000 Workless." Each member is given a copy of this book, and two members are selected to come prepared to speak on the chapter on—say—Pensions. The other members of course, join in.

A common fault is that speeches are not prepared on a definite plan, and as a result the case presented, although containing much good material, is weak and not convincing.

We are now extending our activities, and each Ward Committee and Women's Section has been asked to form a team of speakers to enter an inter-ward competition to be run next winter. Each team is composed of six members, and finally three of these will take part in the competition. One as chairman, the other two as mover and seconder of a resolution. The resolution will probably deal with "May-Day." We shall circulate a short statement on the meaning and significance of May-Day to the movement, and each team will have to draft its resolution. Some kind of prize will be given to the teams who are adjudged to do their job most efficiently.

A number of teams have already been formed, and we are now in the process of forming evening speakers' classes for men and women members in addition to the class mentioned above. This has been found necessary to meet the demand of teams for training. Some teams, however, claim to be able to train themselves.

The result of this effort so far as speakers are concerned remains to be seen. But on two points we are bound to be successful. A number of members will settle down to definite study of various important subjects, and a new interest for members will be created.

(Concluded from page 137.)

been to bring out a fresh, original and highly helpful number each month, articles appear from time to time which should not be entirely relegated to the limbo of the past; these bear re-presentation and from expressions we have received in the past, we know our readers think so too.

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On Promoting and Organising a Meeting

Our readers will be interested to learn that the following article is actually a student's reply to a question set in the Labour Party's Study Scheme in Election Law and Organisation. The writer (Mr. I. Watkins, of 50, Park Place, Gilfach-Bargoed, Glam.), is to be congratulated on giving a highly-instructive and practical essay on how to organise a public meeting. We are happy to acknowledge the courtesy extended, both by the writer and Mr. Harold Croft (Registrar of Study Scheme), in giving permission to us to publish this paper:—

Whatever the work that requires to be done, *plan* it, and do one thing at a time.

Chart your activities on a large sheet of paper. You have a month in which to organise for a full meeting, so your sheet will be ruled into four large squares, each square representing a week. These large squares will each be sub-divided into seven smaller squares, each representing a day. Each single square is *dated*, and the work to be done on that day to be written within the square. One of the merits of this charting activity is that it enables you to see and think ahead. There is a great saving, too, of effort. When each action has been accomplished it can be crossed out with red ink. If, for any reason, something is not done, then it can be transferred into another square ahead.

A space at the side of your chart will be utilised for pertinent notes. For instance, the attendance at the last meeting of a similar nature at the same hall, and the methods of organisation which were then adopted. If that meeting failed in point of view of attendance, you will endeavour to diagnose the cause or causes of the failure, and will adapt your own plans accordingly. If, on the other hand, it was completely successful, you can follow on similar lines.

Publicity, you will note, has two main divisions (1) that which you get for nothing, and (2) that which you have to pay for. A note on your chart will indicate the exact amount which you have to expend, and here discrimination will have to be exercised as to the best means of attracting the notice and interest of your potential audience according to the money set apart for this purpose.

Now to see what activities are to be set down in the squares of your chart.

You will notify the secretaries of all affiliated sections, especially those expressly concerned with Trade Union activity. These will be notified twice, once at the onset of the campaign and afterwards immediately prior to the meeting. You will endeavour to obtain the number likely to attend from each branch. Figures are the building-bricks of organisation. A joint meeting of the chairmen and secretaries of the various branches could possibly be arranged in order to formulate ways and means of attracting members to the meeting. Each secretary will be supplied with leaflets, or duplicated letters of invitation for distribution.

In nearly every section there is some one person who makes contact with all members of that section. It may be the collector. Ask him to bring the meeting to the attention of those upon whom he calls. Let him have a sufficient number of leaflets or other available announcements. Do not be afraid of duplication of appeals. It is better to risk asking a person twice than not to ask him at all.

The duplicator in the corner of your office is crying to be put into action. Duplication is cheap but . . . it sometimes is so very ugly. Sometimes each sheet coming through the machine is marred by a cascade of ink splashes, yet out they go. It pays to be careful in the arrangement of your duplicated letter of invitation. You are perhaps going to run off a thousand copies from your original, therefore see that your stencil is cut carefully, adapt and re-adapt its wording until you are satisfied that each word has pulling power, see that important words or phrases *stand out* and clean the machine thoroughly. Attention to these details will make it worth your while to get the voting register for obtaining the names and addresses of those to whom the invitations are to be delivered.

Consult with your printer about your posters. Try to see that they are different, either in colour, in arrangement of wording, or both. Go to the printer with an idea. It may not be acceptable, but, on the other hand, it may cause the printer to open out with a new suggestion. Originality *attracts attention*! Afterwards, the posters obtained, don't bury them away in the

windows of your back street members. Bear in mind the places in the locality where people congregate and have your posters fixed up there first.

Your chart will indicate an appropriate announcement in the local press timed to appear immediately before the meeting. Your announcement will be on that page which the politically-minded are in the habit of reading. A photograph will accompany your announcement; pictures do count, even with grown-ups. A news-paragraph stating the record and service of the speaker will also be inserted (if possible).

Don't ignore the general public in your publicity campaign. There is much joy in the hearts of the local executive over a lost one brought into the Socialist fold.

Quite early in your campaign you will have obtained something of the record of the speaker. You will have sent a résumé of his activities and of his long service to the affiliated trade union branches, and will have stressed how expert he is to speak on the subject of trade union action. Your chart will indicate too who is to meet the speaker at the station, and you will forward to the speaker full particulars of the times of the trains.

All the time, running through your activities—the golden thread—will be your objective. The public meeting for which you are strenuously preparing is not a pleasant interlude. You have an immediate objective besides that of broadening and deepening your membership by 50. And you are not hugging that—a dark secret—to yourself. You are making it the central factor of your campaign. That is your concrete aim, and concrete aims are good things to have as the basis of organising.

On the immediate eve of the meeting there will be a joint offensive upon all sections and the general public. Have your helpers on the pit-tops, at the factory gates, in the main streets, delivering leaflets. You will put your combined energy into letting people know within a suitable radius that the meeting is to-night.

The hall must receive attention. The literature secretary will be there with his helpers, so also will be a table with membership forms, and pen and ink all ready before the meeting opens. The hall must be well lit, especially where the speaker is to stand. Representative men and

women will be seated on the platform. Councillor M . . . (to whose activities the recent local industrial dispute was settled) will come on the platform with the speaker. This may arouse a burst of spontaneous enthusiasm which is all to the good. Comrade O . . . who is prone to the weakness of listening to his own voice for interminable periods will not be given the opportunity to submerge that enthusiasm. The chairman is cast in something of the same mould as the speaker. The object of the meeting will be stressed from the platform—50 new members. The membership forms already on the seats will be referred to, and that the secretary will be at the table at the conclusion of the meeting to receive the forms that are filled in. The collection is taken, and the speaker commences.

The speech over, a vote of thanks passed, the speaker is escorted to the station, and, with luck, you are looking with satisfaction at the sixty-five membership forms handed in to the secretary.

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We should like to draw our readers' special attention to the report form printed on page 151. The systemisation of reports from Wards and Local Parties is a pressing need within the Party and we recommend this form for its simplicity and general usefulness.

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New Times demand New Measures

By Miss CLARA ADAMS.

The political Labour Movement has been in existence some thirty years, and thanks to the devoted service of the early pioneers, we now have a formidable organisation with Labour representation on almost every public body.

But the methods upon which the Party machine has been built up are less appropriate to-day. The pioneers rendered magnificent service by engaging in extensive propaganda work at the street corners, and whilst the street corner method was effective as long as we were engaged in "offensive" warfare to build up our organisation, we now require the dynamic force of a conscious membership, and an educated public opinion to make it work, and to justify its existence. To secure this, *intensive educational work* must replace the propaganda work of times past. Our inadequate educational system has taught the people how to read, but not always how to think, and in spite of the Illegal and Corrupt Practices Act, votes can still be manipulated to suit Party catch-cries. An educated democracy and a conscious citizenship is very essential if the next Labour Government is to be really effective.

Efforts in the future must therefore be made, not only to increase membership, but to secure a better understanding of our policy. A rejuvenation of ideas by an influx of young life, and a willingness to adopt new methods in keeping with the march of progress is also essential. Consideration of these things is more important for women than for men, because the busy house-wife has not much time to spare, and that time must be spent to the best advantage.

The present article is specially concerned with the best methods of increasing interest and understanding amongst women. Many women's sections have barely existed through inability to get speakers, and interest has been lost when there has been no real objective in meeting. Busy women will not waste time attending useless meetings, and many women will not attend business meetings at all. It is preferable for all business to be conducted in the general local Party meetings.

Every Labour Party should, therefore, convene — in conjunction with

Women's Sections where these exist — special meetings of all women members on their books, with a view to forming study groups. A definite scheme of study should be carefully planned on whatever subject is desired, so that members will know a week in advance what is to be discussed the following week. The "Socratic" method of question and answer might be adopted, or one member might be appointed to introduce the subject at each meeting which would be followed by a general discussion. Another alternative is for some book to be carefully read and whichever method is adopted, members might in turn write up a log of what takes place, and read it at the beginning of the next meeting, thereby establishing a point of contact between one meeting and another. If there is an outstanding woman in the group who will draw up a scheme, and keep the discussion on right lines, so much the better, otherwise, a leader must be appointed each week.

Experience has proved that this kind of meeting has aroused great interest. It has been the means of increasing knowledge and understanding, and has provided opportunity for reading, writing and speaking practice. Women who are too timid to take part in section or party meetings will unconsciously take part in a study circle discussion, because the gathering is less formal, and, therefore, less awe-inspiring.

Public lectures for women will also attract non-members, and many people, including public officials, will help in this respect, if our object is to arouse public interest and to make good citizens. Social rallies might be interspersed to provide opportunity for social intercourse.

Inter-visitation between groups, or members of groups, would augment what is already being done by conferences arranged by the Advisory Councils, to give a fuller conception of the extent of our Movement, and thus help to break down the parochialism which exists in some areas. Advisory Councils could do useful work in arranging inter-visitation schemes for groups which meet in their respective areas, and might also assist in organising schemes of study for study groups.

Scientific management has been applied to industry to increase production with a minimum of effort and time. Our complex social system demands scientific management in political organisation if we are to succeed in establishing, not only adult suffrage, but an electorate that is politically and socially conscious. Let us then put aside all prejudices and overhaul our machinery to achieve better and more lasting results.
(Reprinted from the "Labour Organiser" for June, 1925.)

VOTING BY CHILDREN.

The vexed question of whether or no a person under 21 years of age who came on the register by error was entitled to exercise the Franchise has now apparently been decided by the Home Office, who, in a circular to Returning Officers, issued just prior to the General Election, gave an instruction as follows:—

"It occasionally happens that on account of misleading information given to canvassers children become registered as Parliamentary electors; and the Secretary of State has had under consideration, after consultation with acting Returning Officers and agents from the central offices of the chief political organisations, the course which might properly be adopted by the Presiding Officer at the polling station in the event of a child so registered being brought up to vote.

"Section 7 of the Ballot Act, 1872, and section 8 of the Representation of the People Act, 1918, entitle every person to vote whose name is on the register. The former section, however, expressly provided that no person is entitled to vote who is prohibited from voting by any statute or by the common law of Parliament. Similarly, section 9 (3) of the Act of 1918, provides that nothing in the Act except as expressly provided therein, shall confer on any person, who is subject to any legal incapacity to be registered or to vote, any right to be so registered or to vote.

"Further, section 9 (1) of the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Prevention Act, 1883, provides that any person is guilty of an illegal practice if he votes or induces or procures any person to vote at any Parliamentary election, knowing that he or such person is prohibited, whether by that Act, or any other Act, from voting at

such election; and by section 10, a person guilty of an illegal practice is on summary conviction liable to a fine of £100, and is disqualified for a period of five years for being registered as an elector and voting at any election in the constituency. It will be observed that the offence of an illegal practice arises in cases where voting is prohibited by *Statute* and not in cases where voting is prohibited by the common law of Parliament; but persons under the age of 21 years are expressly prohibited from voting by section 7 of the 7 and 8 Will. 3, c 25, which provides that no person under the age of 21 years shall be admitted to vote at any election of a Member of Parliament.

"Some acting Returning Officers have instructed the Presiding Officers not to admit the vote of a child whose name is on the register, whilst others have felt that the express statutory direction that each registered elector is entitled to receive a ballot paper and to vote precludes the refusal of the vote by the Presiding Officer.

"It is, of course, for the acting Returning Officer to decide what instructions to give to the Presiding Officer in the matter; but the Secretary of State suggests that, in any case where a child obviously of tender age is brought to the polling station by a relative, agent or other person, a ballot paper should not be supplied without it first being explained by the Presiding Officer that not only the child but any person inducing or procuring him or her to vote is guilty of an offence punishable as above mentioned. If in spite of this caution the ballot paper is demanded and the vote is allowed to be recorded, the Presiding Officer should report the facts of the cases to the acting Returning Officer with the view to his taking the necessary steps to secure the provisions of the Act of 1883.

"It may be added that the adoption of this procedure is suggested only in cases where the infancy of the elector is so apparent as to be beyond all reasonable doubt."
(From the "L.O.," December, 1923.)

BOURNEMOUTH.

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Get right away from the Movement and have a holiday or rest with us. Terms from 49/- per week. Write Manager.

REPORT FORM FOR WARD COMMITTEES, OR
LOCAL LABOUR PARTIES (COUNTY DIVISIONS).

MONTH OF.....193

Goodleaven Divisional Labour Party

NAME OF WARD COMMITTEE (or Local Labour Party).....

A. Number of Individual Members as per last

return

Number of New Members this month (see over).....

Gross total

Number of Members struck off this month (see over)

Nett present Membership

B. Please state approximately the number of non-members
visited during month and invited to join the Party

C. Please indicate number of indoor and outdoor meetings
held in your area since last return.....

D. Please state the approximate quantity of literature sold or
distributed since last return.....

E. Please indicate the nature and number of any social activities
organised by your organisation since last return.....

F. Please indicate the present financial position of your Party
.....

NOTICES.

1. Local Secretaries are earnestly requested to send this form *each month* to the Divisional Secretary. Questions are not asked out of curiosity but solely to secure *good organisation*.

2. A and B should be filled in each month. The remaining information is required *each quarter at least*. Copy of Balance Sheet should be attached when available.

3. Names and addresses of new or lost members should be given on the back of this form, or separately.

4. Shortage of collectors, or difficulties in collecting, should be immediately reported to the Divisional Secretary or Divisional Head Collector.

5. No member should be struck off the books until visited and reported on by a MEMBERSHIP VISITOR.



LAW AND PRACTICE



The Use of Cars in Elections

Apart from the heavy handicap which Labour candidates experience as a result of the excessive permissible expenses of candidates in all classes of elections, there is another factor which materially increases the electoral advantages which a rich candidate possesses. We refer to the unrestricted use of private cars for conveying voters to the poll.

Fleets of three or four hundred cars are by no means uncommon. Probably over 100,000 cars were mobilised against Labour at the last General Election, and the likelihoods are that Labour did not possess many more than a thousand all told — if indeed that figure was reached.

No end of Labour resolutions have been passed condemning this inequality, and in most cases demanding that the use of cars, except for personal use, or the use of invalids, should be made illegal. We of course are in entire agreement with this proposal, though we regret that we seem to stand almost alone in our advocacy that Labour should be consistent in the matter, and refuse to accept cars at all for the purpose of conveying voters.

Our view is that by being consistent in the matter Labour would have a far better case: the unfairness of the position would be more obvious to every clear-minded elector, than when it appears to him that the complaint arises just because Labour cannot borrow so many cars as its opponents. In how many constituencies would Labour be seriously hampered by the loss of cars altogether? Are not borrowed cars used even now not so much for the purpose of fetching up voters as for the use of the

workers—a legitimate use for which payment may be made?

However, until the Movement sees eye to eye with us we must comport ourselves in patience. The purpose of this article is to examine the law upon the matter as it stands, and suggestions that have been made for its remedy.

Stung by the injustice of the present position, Labour Election Agents at both Parliamentary and Local Government Elections are sometimes tempted to run the risk of hiring cars. It is a foolish risk to run, for the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act, 1883, imposes heavy penalties for this offence. Section 7 of the C.I.P.A. prohibits any payment or contract for payment on account of the conveyance of electors to or from the poll, whether for the hire of horses or carriages, or for railway fares or otherwise.

The identical wording of the above Act which applies to Parliamentary Elections is also enacted in the Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act) 1884, Section IV, and this applies to Borough and County Council Elections.

So far as to Urban and Rural District Council and Parish Council Elections are concerned, the last-mentioned Act is applied to them by Section 48 (3) of the Local Government Act, 1894.

There are two legal points connected with the above matter which some day may be cleared up. It is obvious that no car is run without payment for petrol, and frequently there is payment for garage as well. We should like to see tested the question whether or no these pay-

ments by individuals for the purpose of conveying the voters to the poll fall within the prohibition of the Sections quoted above. Tory agents obviously go to great expense in organising these fleets of cars, even to the employment of special transport officers. Surely this is an illegal expense covered by the Section besides being an illegal employment?

Another ambiguous point which affects Urban and Rural District Councils only arises out of the provision in L.G. Act, 1894, Section 46 (3b) which applies to these elections the following clause:—

“The provisions of this Act which prohibit the payment of any sum, and the incurring of any expense by or on behalf of a candidate at an election, on account of, or in respect of, the conduct or management of the election, and those which relate to the time for sending in and paying claims, and those which relate to the maximum amount of election expenses, or the return or declaration respecting election expenses, shall not apply.”

The above enactment is the one which exempts candidates at Urban Rural District Council Elections from sending in a return of expenses, or of observing any maximum, but the wording is so vague that it might well be taken as exempting them also from the provision which prohibits payment for hiring vehicles. So far as we are aware the point has never been raised in any Court of Law. We must leave it at that.

Agents who are tempted to promise to refund the cost of petrol to any person lending a car are reminded that this payment falls under the prohibition; and both the provisions quoted above make the offence an illegal practice, the punishment for which is a fine of £100 and five years incapacity from being registered or holding a public office. If the candidate is involved he may be unseated.

But the Corrupt Practices Acts do not stop here. Section 14 of the C.I.P.P.A., 1883, and Section 10 of the Municipal Elections (C. & I.P.) Act, 1884, contain in identical words provisions respecting hackney carriages, and the wording is fairly wide.

It is an offence to let, lend or employ for the conveyance of electors, any public stage or hackney carriage, or any similar vehicle kept or used for the purpose of letting out for hire. The words “let or lend” cover the

owner, and the “employ” covers the borrower. The lender is covered if he genuinely has no knowledge of the purpose for which the vehicle is to be used, but the person employing the vehicle cannot, of course, possess the same excuse.

It will be seen that this prohibition, like the former one, applies only to the conveyance of voters to and from the poll. It is no offence at all to hire vehicles for the use of workers only, or for advertising purposes.

In practice, some doubts can arise as to the application of the Sections just quoted to particular vehicles, and the position is complicated by a further provision which gives exemption from licence duty to a vehicle used solely for conveying voters to and from the poll. Questions sometimes arise regarding the category in which a vehicle falls which has been lying up for some time. We have been asked, for instance, whether a vehicle might be used for fetching up voters which at one time had been used for public service, but was now no longer so used, but held for sale or for conversion. The governing principle in every case is the normal use to which a vehicle is put. A commercial vehicle is not prohibited unless normally hired. An old bus or char-a-banc might possibly be resurrected if its former use had been entirely discontinued, but there is considerable risk in the matter.

It may be of interest to our readers to recall the proposals that were made for dealing with cars under the Labour Government's Representation of the People (No. 2) Bill, introduced into the House of Commons in 1931. We will quote in full the Section dealing with the matter:—

6.—(1) Subject to the provisions of this section, no person shall use any vehicle to which this section applies, or permit any such vehicle to be used, for the purpose of conveying to the poll at a parliamentary election any person other than the owner of the vehicle or a member of his family resident with him.

(2) Any person, being the owner of a vehicle to which this section applies, who is desirous of using that vehicle for the purpose of conveying to the poll persons other than those mentioned in sub-section (1) of this section, may, in such manner as may be prescribed by regulations made by the Secretary of State, register that

vehicle with the returning officer of the constituency in which he desires to use the vehicle, and any vehicles so registered shall be allotted by the returning officer for use in such manner as he, after consultation with the election agents of all the candidates, thinks desirable, having regard to the needs of the several parts of the constituency, with a view to facilitating the conveyance of voters irrespective of party to their polling stations, and any vehicles so allotted may, notwithstanding anything contained in this section, be used for the purposes to which they are allotted.

(3) If any person uses any vehicle, or permits any vehicle to be used in contravention of the provisions of this section, he shall be guilty of an illegal hiring within the meaning of the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Prevention Act, 1883:

Provided that the court before which a person being a candidate or an election agent of a candidate, is convicted under this section may, if they think it just in the special circumstances of the case, mitigate or entirely remit any incapacity imposed by section ten of the said Act.

(4) The vehicles to which this section applies are vehicles intended or adapted for use on roads, other than

such vehicles as by virtue of sub-section (1) of section fourteen of the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Prevention Act, 1883, may not be used for the conveyance of voters to or from the poll.

Our readers will recall that this Section came under our condemnation as imposing an obligation on Returning Officers, which was unreasonable, and might call their impartiality into question, while we also pointed to evasions that were possible, and other difficulties that would arise. While the Act was before the House, other proposals were afoot which would have limited the number of vehicles which might be used by any candidate. We opine that the original proposal was a compromise one, and so also were the others. Anyway, the position remains at it was. A great injustice exists, and Labour should, in our opinion, continue vigorously to protest and expose the utter unfairness of the present position. If difficulties arise regarding people who cannot exercise the franchise through sickness, or other cause, these might be met by an extension of the opportunities for voting through the post—not, we admit, an altogether satisfactory method of dealing with the matter.

Keeping the Flag Flying in Rural Areas

Progress slow but sure seems to be attending the efforts of the Labour Party in the rural areas where Labour has, as yet, by no means recovered the position in which it stood industrially in 1920. It is not our purpose here to deal with the reasons or the facts that lie behind the above statements which, however, are commonplace to every area organiser.

We want instead to present one or two hints of a helpful nature to the officers and Parties who are seeking to make ground in the undeveloped areas. In almost all but the purely urban, or mining type, of County Division, the Labour position is that there is some centre, or centres of activity, more often of an urban character, and from these centres the agricultural desert around gets what political sustenance it may. In few places indeed is the position reversed, and it can be said that the constituency as a whole functions for Labour

and contributes to its Divisional Party.

It is probably true that by spending large sums of money most agricultural constituencies could be made to produce a chain of Labour Committees and organised Parties. That indeed is one of the poignant facts of the situation, i.e., that had we the money the organisation could be built, for the real difficulty in the way of functioning of so many territorial Parties is largely one of transit and communication, and the expense of sustaining continual interest in Labour policy.

But there are palliatives; and we have collected two or three for the purposes of this article. Let us take the position that is so common—that of a Divisional organisation which knows of individual supporters, or even perhaps of past officers, in outlying villages and hamlets, but who, because they are so few, cannot be effectively “organised” and cannot be

brought to meetings. Shall these people be neglected till the chances of political warfare bring another election along, when our isolated friend is expected to lend his room or lend his services during the asperities of a political contest?

The best thing we have seen done in this situation is to mark these isolated friends down as "correspondents." Let their names be collected and kept, then utilise every possible opportunity of sending them news of battle in other centres. The Labour "Citizen" is an admirable publication of which a quantity may be obtained at a fractional price for utilisation among these "correspondents."

To supply each correspondent with a copy of "The Citizen" each month would cost approximately 7½d. per head per annum, including postage. Is not this trivial expense worth going to to keep the spark alive in remote villages? But we would add to this the occasional letter, even if it is only to convey an invitation to some function the recipient probably cannot attend; the letter is news—it is contact, it shows remembrance, and it encourages thought concerning the Party and its welfare. If the method we advise is more generally adopted we believe that many an outpost would develop into a valuable centre. And even where Parties and Committees cannot be sustained news would percolate and interest be kept up.

Now the next hint is applicable both to the "correspondent" of the kind above mentioned and to a regularly appointed secretary of a Polling District Committee. Give them memo. books and a letter pad. You want news sometimes; you want replies, to know whether your correspondent or secretary is dead or alive; and above all, you yearn to get that occasional letter, not perhaps very erudite, or easily understood, but the one which tells of the progress of opinion and the headway that is being made on the countryside.

Now in the hamlets and the villages and the bare beyond, blackberries and crab apples are more plentiful than memo. books and writing pads. *Think of his position and his convenience* and these little trifles will be forthcoming. In time you will get what you want.

Perhaps your organisation has got a little further. Maybe you have a local secretary — or better still you have

developed to the point where collectors have been appointed to bring in your subscriptions. Mr. Gee, of North Norfolk, who knows something of rural organisation (North Norfolk is the only truly rural constituency at present held by Labour, the Member being Noel Buxton, M.P., late Minister of Agriculture) makes a point of advertising the collectors' or secretaries' names on any leaflets or handbills announcing meetings that are likely to circulate in the area. Obviously care is sometimes needed, but where it can be done there is a public status conferred on your collector or secretary which carries a long way, and in its turn reflects a benefit on your Party. Mr. Gee finds the plan quite excellent.

The last tip to-day is to keep your eye open for the villager born to politics, the type of whom has been reproduced in thousands since long before the countryman ever got a vote at all. The political battles of the past and the historic victories of democratic thought have not all been in the towns — by no means.

One finds occasionally in the villages a type of man whose interest and activities go out to politics as the duck takes to water. He knows his countryside, the politics of this and that family, where votes are to be got, or where new voters should be put upon the register. This type of man knows nothing of delegateship or team work in organisation. He is a kingdom to himself, but he sways votes and polls votes. These men are to be found; they are worth getting on your side, and the canvassing of villages by hordes of strangers is not to be compared with the work of one such politician. One you have educated and brought him to your fold. Keep this man in contact with you through the "Citizen" and other means, and by and by his strong individuality assimilates the Party outlook — you have struck gold.

(Reprinted from the "Labour Organiser" for December, 1925).

ERRATUM.

By the accidental omission of the word "women" our reply in last month's issue on the question of D.L.P. representation at the Annual Conference was made to read incorrectly. The word "women" should be inserted after the word "the" on line 6 of answer 2 on page 129.

Little Acts of Parliament

(11 & 12 Geo. V. c. 34.)

An Act to amend the Representation of the People Acts, 1918 to 1920, with respect to interruptions of residence during the qualifying period.

(4th August, 1921.)

1. (1) The residence of a person in any premises shall not be deemed to have been interrupted for the purposes of the Representation of the People Acts, 1918 to 1920, by reason only of the fact that that person has been absent from the premises during part of the qualifying period (not exceeding two months at any one time or if the residence commenced more than six months before the last day of the qualifying period during a part of those six months) not exceeding four months at any one time, in the performance of any duty arising from or incidental to any office, service, or employment held or undertaken by him; but the express enactment of this provision shall not affect in any way the general principles governing the interpretation of the expression "residence" and cognate expressions.
- (2) Section three of the Police Disabilities Removal Act, 1887, is hereby repealed.
2. This Act may be cited as the Representation of the People Act, 1921, and the Representation of the People Acts, 1918 to 1920, and this Act may be cited together as the Representation of the People Acts, 1918 to 1921.

(30 & 31 Vict. c. 102.)

An Act further to amend the Laws relating to the Representation of the People in England and Wales.

(15th August, 1867.)

37. At every contested election for any county or borough, unless some building or place belonging to the county or borough is provided for that purpose, the returning officer shall, whenever it is practicable so to do, instead of erecting a booth, hire a building or room for the purpose of taking the poll.
49. Any person, either directly or indirectly, corruptly paying any rate on behalf of any ratepayer for the purpose of enabling him to be registered as a voter, thereby to influence his vote at any future election, and any candidate or other person, either directly or indirectly, paying any rate on behalf of any voter for the purpose of inducing him to vote or refrain from voting, shall be guilty of bribery, and be punishable accordingly; and any person on whose behalf and with whose privity any such payment as in this section is mentioned is made shall also be guilty of bribery, and punishable accordingly.
50. No returning officer for any county or borough, nor his deputy, nor any partner or clerk of either of them, shall act as agent for any candidate in the management or conduct of his election as a member to serve in Parliament for such county or borough; and if any returning officer, his deputy, the partner or clerk of either of them, shall so act, he shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.
61. The following terms shall in this Act have the meanings hereinafter assigned to them, unless there is something in the context repugnant to such construction; (that is to say) "Election" shall mean an election of a member or members to serve in Parliament.
 "County" shall not include a county of a city or a county of a town, but shall mean any county, riding, parts or divisions of a county returning a member or members to serve in Parliament.
 "Borough" shall mean any borough, city, place, or combination of places, not being a county as hereinbefore defined, returning a member or members to serve in Parliament.